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THE THINK OF THE LEF

By Joshua Muravchik

When Richard J. Barnet and Marcus G. Raskin, co-founders of the Institute for Policy Studies and its co-directors for 14 years, met in 1961, they discovered they had two things in common. Both men felt a growing sense of disillusionment. "They wondered whether the major institutions of American life had not become inimical to the life and safety of the Republic," recalls one I.P.S. brochure. But they also shared an understanding of how the system worked. "Modern nations run on ideas," was the way Raskin put it. It was an insight not grasped by most other radicals of the 1960's who sought to bring about fundamental change. Many of them became intoxicated with the romantic attraction of direct action. A few consumed themselves in revolutionary violence. Barnet and Raskin established a think tank.

Today, the Institute for Policy Studies is flourishing. Its annual budget has increased eightfold — to nearly \$2 million — since 1963, the year I.P.S. was founded. It employs about 75 fellows (full-time scholars), visiting fellows, research and staff associates, administrators and part-time associate fellows in its Washington headquarters and its European office, the Transnational Institute, set up in Amsterdam in 1974. Its

regular publications include a weekly, *In These Times*, and two quarterlies, *Race and Class*, co-published with the Institute of Race Relations in London, and the *Transnational Information Exchange Bulletin*, co-published with the World Council of Churches. Of the institute's dozens of books, many are widely reviewed and enjoy substantial sales. I.P.S. fellows write frequently for *The New Yorker*, *Harper's* and *The Nation*, as well as for major newspapers. I.P.S. also produces films, one of which, "Paul Jacobs and the Nuclear Gang" — about the perils of nuclear radiation — won an Emmy in 1979.

I.P.S.'s principal source of financial support is the Samuel Rubin Foundation, founded by the owner of Fabergé cosmetics. When Rubin died in 1978, he was eulogized by Marcus Raskin as one of those "who dare call themselves revolutionary." Since 1978, his daughter, Cora Weiss, has been president of the foundation. Her husband, Peter, is vice president of the foundation and chairman of the I.P.S. board of trustees. The foundation has supported educational, medical and cultural projects, but its main activity is described in the "Foundation Center Source Book" as "grants primarily for programs concerned with the pursuit of peace and justice, the search for an equitable reallocation of the world's resources, and the fullest implementation of social, economic, political, civil and cultural rights, for all the world's people."

In its most important report, I.P.S. documents the "Washington School" of thought, a search institute for "radical ideas." Says Robert Kennedy, who succeeded Barnet as director of the school, "I.P.S. became head of the Transnational Institute." I.P.S.'s American branch is "almost completely" of a liberal, pragmatic, philosophical basis. European contingent almost completely comes out of a Marxist or at least a liberation basis." *Race and Class*, the journal co-published by I.P.S. in Europe, has featured articles celebrating Communist victories in Laos and Angola, warning that England and West Germany are heading toward fascism, and lauding progress toward women's liberation in China, Cuba and within the People's Front for the Liberation of Oman.

Like Washington's other think tanks — the Brookings Institution, the American Enterprise Institute and the Heritage Foundation — I.P.S. seeks to influence not only the climate of ideas but also Government policy. Its Washington School, founded in 1979, draws several hundred students each year from Capitol Hill, the public-interest community, the Federal Government and universities. According to its brochure, the school "has assembled a learned, distinguished and committed faculty, dedicated to the central task of education: to secure world peace, human freedom and social justice." Some of the several dozen faculty give only one or two lectures; others teach full-semester